

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PEKING 00457 170722Z

21

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SMI-01 CU-02 PA-01 PRS-01 USIA-06 /022 W

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FM USLO PEKING

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3397

INFO AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE PEKING 457

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, CH, US

SUBJECT: OBITUARY NOTICE FOR MILTON THE MUSK OX

REF: PEKING 450

TOKYO PLEASE PASS SECRETARY DILLON RIPLEY

1. DURING MARCH 17 CALL AT MFA U.S. DIVISION DEPUTY DIRECTOR CHAO CHI-HUA, IN TERMS OF A PEOPLE'S DAILY OBITUARY, INFORMED US THAT MILTON THE MUSK OX, HAVING CONTRACTED RETICULITIS TRAUMATICA AND HAVING FAILED TO RESPOND TO TREATMENT, DIED AROUND FEBRUARY 20. CHAO SAID THIS WAS PARTICULARLY UNFORTUNATE SINCE THE MUSK OX WAS A GIFT OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE. USLO OFFICER EXPRESSED UNDERSTANDING OF THE DIFFICULTIES INVOLVED IN MOVING ANIMALS SUCH GREAT

DISTANCES AND SAID HE WOULD REPORT THE SAD NEWS TO WASHINGTON.

2. COMMENT: CHINESE WERE OBVIOUSLY HIGHLY EMBARRASSED OVER MILTON'S DEMISE AND MIGHT HAVE CONTINUED TO TRY AND COVER IT UP HAD THEY NOT BEEN FOUND OUT DURING SECRETARY RIPLEY VISIT TO THE PEKING ZOO (REFTEL).

IN FACT, CHAO CONCLUDED HIS REMARKS BY NOTING THAT SEVERAL AMERICANS HAD VISITED THE ZOO RECENTLY AND WE MAY HAVE ALREADY HEARD THE NEWS.

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Message Attributes

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